

AMENDMENTS IN THE CLAIMS

1. (Original) A system for identifying an animal and the owner of the animal comprising:

first coded indicia uniquely identifying the owner, said first coded indicia

comprising:

5 a first portion identifying a state of residence or location of the owner;

a second portion identifying a county of residence or location of the

owner; and

a third portion uniquely identifying a farm or ranch on which the owner resides or is located within the owner's county;

10 second coded indicia uniquely identifying the animal, said second coded

indicia comprising:

a fourth portion identifying the type of animal;

a fifth portion identifying an individual animal within the owner's herd or flock by number; and

15 a sixth portion identifying the country of origin of the animal;

a marker containing said first and second coded indicia permanently attached to the animal;

a memory storing said first and second coded indicia in a central location for future reference; and

a global information network coupled to said memory for making said first and second coded indicia available on a worldwide basis.

2. (Currently amended) The system of claim 1 wherein the first portion of said first coded indicia is an abbreviation of the state of residence or location of the [animal] owner.

3. (Original) The system of claim 2 wherein the second portion of said first coded indicia is a number identifying the county of residence or location of the owner.

4. (Original) The system of claim 2 wherein the third portion of said first coded indicia is a number uniquely identifying a farm or ranch on which the owner resides or is located within the owner's county.

5. (Original) The system of claim 1 wherein the fourth portion of said second coded indicia is at least one alphabet character uniquely identifying the type of animal.

6. (Original) The system of claim 5 wherein the fifth portion of said second coded indicia is a number uniquely identifying the animal within the owner's herd or flock.

7. (Original) The system of claim 6 wherein the sixth portion of said second coded indicia is a two letter alphabet code identifying the country of origin of the animal.

8. (Original) The system of claim 1 wherein said marker is attached to an ear of the animal.

9. (Original) The system of claim 1 wherein said marker is irremovably inserted in a muzzle of the animal.

10. (Currently amended) The system of claim 1 wherein said marker is implanted under the skin of the animal, and said system further includes a scanning device for transmitting

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a first inquiry signal to said marker and receiving a second animal and animal owner identification signal from said marker.

11. (Original) The system of claim 1 wherein said marker is comprised of a generally flat first end portion containing said first and second coded indicia, a semi-spherically-shaped second end portion adapted for insertion in and retention by a muzzle of the animal, and an elongated, linear member having first and second ends respectively coupled to said generally flat first end portion and to said semi-spherically-shaped second end portion.

12. (Currently amended) The system of claim 11 wherein said [semi-spherically-shaped] semispherically-shaped second end portion includes a semispherically-shaped distal end.

13. (Original) The system of claim 12 wherein said elongated, linear member is cylindrically shaped.

14. (Original) The system of claim 13 wherein said marker is comprised of high strength plastic.

15. (Currently amended) A method for recording ownership and identification information of animals and distributing said ownership and identification information to facilitate recovery of lost or stolen animals by the owner and identification of the animals, said method comprising the steps of:

5 assigning first coded indicia to an animal owner by providing a first portion of said first coded indicia in accordance with a state of residence or location of the owner, a second portion of said first coded indica in accordance with a [country] county of residence or

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location of the owner, and a third portion of said first coded indicia in accordance with the farm or ranch of the owner within the owner's county of residence or location;

assigning second coded indicia to an animal of the owner by providing a fourth portion of said second coded indicia identifying the type of animal, a fifth portion of said
5 second coded indicia identifying the individual animal within the owner's herd or flock [by number], and a [third] sixth portion of said second coded indicia identifying the country of origin of the animal;

affixing said first and second coded indicia to the animal;

storing plural paired first and second coded indicia for plural animals in a
10 memory at a central location, wherein each of said paired first and second coded indicia uniquely identifies each of said animal owners and each of said animals; and

providing said plural paired first and second coded indicia on a global information network for making said plural paired first and second coded indicia available on a worldwide basis.

16. (Original) The method of claim 15 wherein the step of providing a first portion of said first coded indicia includes assigning a two letter abbreviation for the state of residence or location of the animal owner.

17. (Original) The method of claim 16 wherein the step of providing a second portion of said first coded indicia includes assigning a number identifying a county of residence or location of the owner.

18. (Original) The method of claim 17 wherein the step of providing a third portion

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of said first coded indicia includes assigning a number to the farm or ranch of the owner for uniquely identifying the farm or ranch on which the owner resides or is located within the owner's county.

19. (Original) The method of claim 15 wherein the step of providing a fourth portion of said second coded indicia includes assigning at least one alphabet character for uniquely identifying the type of animal.

20. (Original) The method of claim 19 wherein the step of providing a fifth portion of said second coded indicia includes assigning a number for identifying an individual animal within the owner's herd or flock.

21. (Original) The method of claim 20 wherein the step of providing a sixth portion of said second coded indicia includes assigning a two letter alphabet code for identifying the country of origin of the animal.

22. (Original) The method of claim 15 wherein the step of affixing said first and second coded indicia to the animal includes attaching a marker containing said indicia to an ear of the animal.

23. (Currently amended) The method of claim 15 wherein the step of affixing said first and second coded indicia to the animal includes irremovably [inserted] inserting a marker containing said indicia in a muzzle of the animal.

24. (Original) The method of claim 15 wherein the step of affixing said first and second coded indicia to the animal includes implanting a marker containing said indicia under the skin of the animal, and scanning said marker with a first inquiry signal and receiving a

second animal and animal owner identification signal from said marker.

25. (Original) Apparatus adapted for attachment to an animal for uniquely identifying the animal and an owner of the animal, said apparatus comprising:

an elongated generally linear shaft having first and second opposed ends;

a first member attached to the first end of said shaft;

5 a second member attached to the second opposed end of the shaft and having a narrow distal end adapted for insertion in an incision in the animal, said second member extending beyond a lateral dimension of said shaft to allow tissue of the animal disposed about the incision to grow about said second member and in intimate contact with said shaft for permanently attaching the apparatus to the animal, and wherein said first member is disposed
10 outside of said incision adjacent the skin of the animal; and

indicia disposed on said first member and uniquely identifying the animal and the animal's owner.

26. (Original) The apparatus of claim 25 wherein said apparatus is comprised of a unitary piece of high strength plastic.

27. (Original) The apparatus of claim 25 wherein said second member includes a hemispherically-shaped distal end to facilitate insertion of the apparatus in an incision.

28. (Original) The apparatus of claim 27 wherein said shaft and said second member are cylindrically-shaped with said second member having a larger diameter than said shaft.

29. (Original) The apparatus of claim 28 wherein said first member has plural

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lateral surfaces each containing said indicia.

30. (Original) The apparatus of claim 29 wherein said first member is generally rectangular having four lateral surfaces.

31. (Original) The apparatus of claim 25 wherein said apparatus is on the order of 5/8" in length and 1/4" in width.